

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS 2003

BEFORE I BEGIN, I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR TRUST AND ALLOWING ME THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING ALL OF YOU AS THE MAYOR OF OUR GREAT CITY OVER THE PAST YEAR.

UNQUESTIONABLY, THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF ANY GOVERNMENT, WHETHER IT IS LOCAL STATE OR FEDERAL IS PUBLIC SAFETY. IN MIAMI BEACH WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS THAT ARE SECOND TO NONE. YOU CAN REST ASSURED THAT YOUR SAFETY WILL BE OUR FIRST PRIORITY.

JOINING US TODAY IS THE COUNTY'S NEW HOMELAND DEFENSE COORDINATOR **JOE PINION**. JOE HAS A LONG HISTORY WITH THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH HAVING SERVED AS A POLICE OFFICER AND AS AN ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER. JOE, WITH YOUR UNIQUE UNDERSTANDING OF OUR CITY, WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE YOU AT THE COUNTY LEVEL-- WE CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR NEW POSITION AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.

RECENTLY RELEASED STATISTICS SHOW THAT CRIME IS THE LOWEST IT HAS BEEN IN SIX YEARS, REPRESENTING AN OVERALL DROP OF 36 PERCENT. COUNTLESS MEMBERS OF OUR POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS ARE EXCELLING AT SPECIALIZED SAFETY TRAINING METHODS AND TAKING THE LEAD IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FOR ESTABLISHING A HOMELAND SECURITY PLAN.

MIAMI BEACH IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE THREE GREAT STATE REPRESENTATIVES; **GUS BARREIRO, DAN GELBER, AND DOROTHY BENDROSS-MENDIGAL**. THEY ALONG WITH OUR SUPERB STATE **SENATOR GWEN MARGOLIS** HAVE BEEN COMMITTED TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

WE APPRECIATE ALL YOUR EFFORTS IN TALLAHASSEE ENSURING THE SAFETY OF OUR CITY.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AN OFFICER, CHOSEN NOT ONLY BY THE MIAMI BEACH POLICE COMMAND STAFF FOR HIS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE DEPARTMENT, BUT ALSO BY ALL THE COUNTY'S CHIEFS OF POLICE.

DETECTIVE MIKE MULEY PLEASE STAND. THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CHIEFS HAVE SELECTED YOU AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME A RECIPIENT FOR OFFICER OF THE YEAR HAS COME FROM MIAMI BEACH. A LIST OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THIS PAST YEAR IS JUST ASTOUNDING, BUT ONE ACHIEVEMENT I MUST MENTION— WHILE AT HOME, YOU HEARD A CAR PLUNGE INTO A BODY OF WATER. YOU IMMEDIATELY CALLED 911 AND DROVE TO THE SCENE. YOU DISCOVERED THREE PEOPLE TRAPPED INSIDE THE CAR IMMERSED IN WATER RESTING AT THE BOTTOM OF A CANAL. YOU DOVE IN AFTER THE VICTIMS AND SAVED 2 LIVES—ALL THE WHILE-- PUTTING YOURSELF AT EXTREME RISK. YOU WERE AWARDED THE MEDAL OF

VALOR. YOU ARE A HERO. THIS IS JUST ONE OF NINE
COMMENDATIONS YOU RECEIVED THIS YEAR.

I KNOW OUR GREAT POLICE CHIEF, **DON DE LUCCA** AND ALL THE
MEN AND WOMEN OF THE DEPARTMENT ARE PROUD OF YOU MIKE.
OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT IS ALSO ONE OF THE NATION'S BEST. IN FACT
OUR WONDERFUL **CHIEF, FLOYD JORDAN** AND HIS DEPARTMENT WERE
RECENTLY FEATURED ON THE NATIONAL NEWS PROGRAM SIXTY
MINUTES FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY FIRE PREVENTION AND INSPECTION
METHODS.

THE NEWSCAST FEATURED OUR DEPARTMENT AS A PREVENTION
MODEL FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS ACROSS THE ENTIRE NATION.

AND SO THIS NEXT AWARD IS VERY SPECIAL. THE FIRE
DEPARTMENT'S FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR:

DOUGLAS THOMPSON, WILL YOU PLEASE RISE. YOUR COMMAND
STAFF HAS CHOSEN YOU TO RECEIVE THIS IMPORTANT RECOGNITION
FOR YOUR ACTIONS DURING A FIRE AT 401 OCEAN DRIVE ON JANUARY
13, 2003.

WHILE YOU WERE FIGHTING THE FIRE YOU HEARD A FAINT CRY
FOR HELP, CRIES NOT HEARD BY THE OTHER CREW MEMBERS.
SOMEHOW YOU WERE ABLE TO DETERMINE THAT THE CRY WAS
COMING FROM A NEARBY APARTMENT. YOU OPENED THE
APARTMENT DOOR AND FOUND AN ELDERLY WOMAN TRAPPED
INSIDE HER SMOKE-FILLED APARTMENT. YOU LIFTED AND

CARRIED HER DOWN SEVEN FLIGHTS OF STAIRS TO A RESCUE UNIT FOR TREATMENT AND TRANSPORT TO A HOSPITAL. THIS WOMAN SUFFERED FROM MODERATE SMOKE INHALATION, AND IF NOT FOR YOUR ALERT AND QUICK ACTION, HER INJURIES COULD HAVE BEEN MORE SEVERE—IN FACT SHE MAY NOT HAVE MADE IT OUT ALIVE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COURAGEOUS SERVICE. THE FIRE UNION’S MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE DULY COMMENDED FOR ALL OF THEIR WORK AND ALSO FOR THEIR COMMUNITY SERVICE. THEIR CHRISTMAS TOY GIVEAWAY FOR MIAMI BEACH CHILDREN WAS AN UNFORGETTABLE SUCCESS. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING IT AGAIN NEXT YEAR.

EQUALLY, THE POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR ITS COMMUNITY SERVICE, HIGHLIGHTED WITH ITS THANKSGIVING DINNER GIVEAWAY. PAL STAFF COORDINATED THE PURCHASE AND DOOR-TO-DOOR DELIVERY OF THANKSGIVING DINNERS TO HUNDREDS OF MIAMI BEACH FAMILIES IN NEED. PAL IS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS IN THE CITY. THANK YOU.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE PRESIDENT OF THE **POLICE UNION, BOBBY JENKINS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE FIRE UNION DAVE NOEL**, THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, GUYS. BOTH POLICE AND FIRE’S PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST ANNUAL “RESCUERS IN THE RING” CHARITY BOXING EVENT WENT FAR

BEYOND ANYTHING MY OFFICE COULD HAVE EXPECTED. POLICE, FIRE, BEACH PATROL AND THE US COAST GUARD ALL PUT ON THE BOXING GLOVES FOR THIS EXCITING EVENT TO RAISE MONEY FOR CHARITY. MY OFFICE, TOGETHER WITH THE PARTICIPANTS RAISED ABOUT 30 THOUSAND DOLLARS. PROCEEDS BENEFITED THE CITY'S POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE AND THE VICTIM SERVICES CENTER. SOON, WE WILL BEGIN TRAINING FOR OUR SECOND ANNUAL CHARITY BOXING EVENT. AND WHO KNOWS, MAYBE **MUHAMMAD ALI** WILL COME HERE TO JOIN US AGAIN.

THE CITY'S BEACH PATROL ARE THE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS WHO KEEP A WATCHFUL EYE ON OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WHILE THEY ENJOY OUR BEACHES. OUR BEACH PATROL OFFICERS ARE CROSS-TRAINED IN DIFFERENT LIFESAVING METHODS AND ARE A TREASURE IN OUR PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNITY. THERE IS ONE BEACH PATROLMAN THAT, ACCORDING TO HIS **CAPTAIN, VINCE ANDREANO**, STANDS OUT PROFESSIONALLY IN HIS WORK ENVIRONMENT AS WELL AS IN HIS COMMUNITY. HE ALSO HAPPENS TO BE ONE OF THE RESCUERS IN THE RING BOXERS. **AH-LINE GWEE-LEN** PLEASE RISE. YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY YOUR COMMAND STAFF AS THE BEACH PATROLMAN OF THE YEAR. CONGRATULATIONS. NOT ONLY DID YOU DEDICATE FOUR MONTHS OF YOUR PERSONAL TIME TO FIGHT FOR CHARITY—BUT YOUR SUPERIORS SAY THAT ONCE

YOU FINISH YOUR DAILY WORK, YOU GO AROUND THE STATION AND ASK IF THERE IS ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS WORK THAT YOU CAN HELP WITH. YOU ARE KNOWN ON THE BEACH AS ONE OF THE MOST HELPFUL AND FRIENDLY EMPLOYEES AND WILL ALWAYS TAKE THAT EXTRA MOMENT TO ASSIST. WE APPRECIATE YOUR DEDICATION AND THANK YOU FOR GOING THAT EXTRA MILE. CONGRATULATIONS AH-LINE. YOU MAKE US ALL LOOK GOOD!

THE CORNERSTONE OF THE STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS IS TO REPORT TO YOU, RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, PROPERTY OWNERS, TAXPAYERS AND VOTERS, AS TO THE FINANCIAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF MIAMI BEACH. AS YOUR MAYOR, I CAN PROUDLY REPORT THAT WE ARE FINDING OURSELVES IN A RATHER UNIQUE POSITION FINANCIALLY. WHILE OUR BUDGET CUTS WERE MINIMAL—WE ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED AN INCREASE IN OUR BOND RATING.

CONSIDERING THE SHAKY NATIONAL ECONOMY FOLLOWING THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11TH AND IN TODAY'S UNCERTAIN WORLD, MANY CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND HERE IN FLORIDA HAVE BARELY HELD THEIR OWN OR SUFFERED FINANCIAL DOWNTURNS.

HERE IN MIAMI BEACH, WE IN FACT, DID BETTER THAN MOST. OUR BOND RATINGS WERE UPGRADED TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN THE CITY'S HISTORY. ACCORDING TO STANDARDS & POORS, ONE OF THE

NATION'S LEADING BOND-RATING SERVICES, MIAMI BEACH'S RATING ON ITS BONDS HAS BEEN UPGRADED FROM AN A TO AN A+.

THE UPGRADE OF OUR BOND RATING WAS THE RESULT OF A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING SUSTAINED STRONG FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE, BOLSTERED BY LONG-TERM PLANNING AND FORMAL FISCAL POLICIES. STANDARD AND POOR'S ADVISES THAT DURING THE YEAR FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 11TH, MOST STATES AND MANY CITIES EXPERIENCED FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHOSE ECONOMIES ARE LARGELY DEPENDENT ON VISITOR REVENUES. IT WAS FURTHER STATED THAT THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH SUCCESSFULLY ENDURED THESE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES BECAUSE OF PRUDENT FISCAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT, DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ECONOMIC BASE AND CONTINUED GROWTH.

THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH AND REFLECTS OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS FINANCIAL POSITION. IT'S NOT JUST THIS GOVERNMENT THAT ACCOMPLISHED THIS FEAT, IT'S THE QUALITY OF OUR RESIDENTS AND

BUSINESSES AND A STANDARD OF CONFIDENCE IN EACH OTHER AND OUR CITY THAT WE REFUSED TO LET WORLD EVENTS SHAKE.

IN AN EFFORT TO BOOST MORALE AND TO SEARCH FOR SHORT AND LONG TERM MEASURES TO BRING THIS COMMUNITY TOGETHER, THE CREATION OF **THE MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON PANEL ON TOURISM** WAS MY FIRST INITIATIVE FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF

SEPTEMBER 11 AND THE PAST ELECTION. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE BLUE RIBBON PANEL, WHICH INCLUDE RESIDENTS AS WELL AS HOTELIERS, SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS. YOUR EFFORTS OVER THE PAST YEAR HAVE PUT IN PLACE SOME GREAT IDEAS AND INITIATIVES TO BENEFIT BOTH THE RESIDENTIAL AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES. THE BLUE RIBBON PANEL DID BRING A LOT OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE CITY TOGETHER, AND FROM THAT EXPERIENCE, I TRULY BELIEVE THAT MIAMI BEACH IS AN EVEN BETTER COMMUNITY.

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WITHIN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR WHO CAN SHARE IN THE FINANCIAL SUCCESS OF MIAMI BEACH. I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS MOMENT TO COMMEND **COMMISSIONER JOSE SMITH**, WHO CHAIRS THE CITY'S FINANCE COMMITTEE. THANK YOU COMMISSIONER FOR ALL OF YOUR FINE WORK.

ALSO, **LARRY HARRUP**, THE RETIRING BUT LONG TIME CHAIRMAN OF THE CITY'S BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE. THANK YOU LARRY FOR YOUR ADVICE AND WISDOM.

AND PLEASE RISE **PATRICIA WALKER**, THE CITY'S FINANCE DIRECTOR. TRISH AND HER ENTIRE STAFF DESERVE OUR GRATITUDE FOR THEIR PRUDENT FISCAL PLANNING AND CONSIDERABLY CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO SPENDING.

AND OF COURSE, TO MY COLLEAGUES, THE FINAL DECISION MAKERS. WE DID HAVE A FEW CHALLENGING MOMENTS AT THE DAIS WHERE WE GRAPPLED WITH SOME DIFFICULT BUDGETARY DECISIONS, BUT THOSE MOMENTS TURNED INTO OPPORTUNITIES AND BY ALL ACCOUNTS, IT APPEARS WE MADE THE RIGHT DECISIONS. YOU SHOULD ALL BE PROUD.

THOSE DECISIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES HAVE HELPED TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY, MAINTAIN OUR SERVICE LEVELS, AND CONTINUE WITH AN UNPRECEDENTED \$400 MILLION PLUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CITYWIDE. WE CAN BE ESPECIALLY PROUD OF BEING ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE CITY'S CONTINGENCY FUND FOR EMERGENCIES ALONG WITH THE STRENGTH OF RESERVES IN THE CITY'S ENTERPRISE FUNDS. THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND THE FULL COMMISSION ARE DEDICATED TO CONTINUE THAT IMPORTANT ENDEAVOR.

OUR CITY HAS PROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN THAT IT'S RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES PULL TOGETHER AND RISE IN DIFFICULT TIMES.

DURING THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS WE HAVE HOSTED HIGH PROFILE EVENTS THAT HAVE FURTHER ESTABLISHED MIAMI BEACH AS ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT, ART AND CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE COUNTRY. ART BASEL AND THE LATIN AMERICA VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS WERE TWO NEW INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED

EVENTS THAT BRIGHTENED OUR CITY'S REPUTATION AND IMAGE AS AN INVITING, ATTRACTIVE AND SAFE HOST VENUE FOR AN EVER EXPANDING VARIETY OF ART, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AN EMPLOYEE WHO PLAYED A LARGE PART IN OVERSEEING THEIR SUCCESS. **DENNIS LEYVA, OUR ENTERTAINMENT LIAISON**, WILL YOU PLEASE RISE AND ACCEPT OUR GRATITUDE FOR THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOR. THE FIRST MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS LATIN AMERICA EVENT WAS BROADCAST LIVE FROM THE JACKIE GLEASON THEATER TO OVER 410 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS WORLD WIDE. ART BASEL GENERATED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR THIS CITY.... IT PACKED OUR RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS FOR MORE THAN 10 CONSECUTIVE DAYS. DENNIS, I KNOW IT TOOK A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN, BUT YOUR HARD WORK AND LEADERSHIP ARE MOST APPRECIATED.

FOLLOWING ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR EVENT, FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS OUR CITY WILL BE A PART OF A NATIONAL THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE. IN ITS BROADCAST AROUND THE COUNTRY, MIAMI BEACH NEVER LOOKED AS BEAUTIFUL. STAND UP **MICHAEL ALLER**, THAT PARADE WAS YOUR BABY.

WE ALSO WERE CHOSEN BY ABC TO SERVE AS A HOST CITY FOR A TAPING OF GOOD MORNING AMERICA. THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AND MUCH OF THE WORLD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THE SPECTACULAR MIAMI BEACH WE ARE.

ALONG WITH OUR WORLD CLASS MUSEUMS, A NEW CULTURAL CAMPUS AND SOON TO OPEN REGIONAL LIBRARY, MIAMI BEACH CONTINUES TO SUPPORT ITS LONG RUNNING ART DECO WEEKEND. THE FESTIVAL CELEBRATES OUR CITY'S UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE.

THIS EVENT IS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO **COMMISSIONER MATTI BOWER**, WHO DEDICATES HERSELF TO THE WEEKEND'S SUCCESS. CONGRATULATIONS ON ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL EVENT AND TOGETHER WE WILL WORK TOWARD AN EVEN BIGGER AND BETTER ART DECO WEEKEND NEXT YEAR.

AS WE CONTINUE TO DRIVE OUR CITY'S DIRECTION TOWARD ART, CULTURE, AND ENTERTAINMENT, MIAMI BEACH'S ECONOMIC INITIATIVES ARE ALSO MOVING RAPIDLY IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THE CITY ASSISTED OVER 70 BUSINESSES WITH THE "SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S POST 9-11 ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOAN PROGRAM". ULTIMATELY, 32 MIAMI BEACH BUSINESSES QUALIFIED FOR LOANS AND RECEIVED OVER \$2.5 MILLION DOLLARS. WE HAVE MADE A STRONG COMMITMENT TO ASSIST OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THIS COMMISSION HAS WORKED DILIGENTLY TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. WE HAVE RECENTLY BROUGHT IN THE LNR CORPORATION -- THE WORLD RENOWNED WILLIAM MORRIS TALENT AGENCY -- AND TELEPERFORMANCE USA -- TO NAME BUT A FEW.

ALSO EXCITING NEWS: THE ROYAL PALM HOTEL OPENED, THE COURTYARD MARRIOTT OPENED, THE HYATT IS CURRENTLY

RENOVATING THE VICTOR HOTEL ON OCEAN DRIVE, A \$40 MILLION PROJECT. THERE'S THE RITZ CARLTON AND THE OPENING OF THE MUCH NEEDED 10TH STREET GARAGE, WHICH PROVIDES ADDITIONAL PARKING FOR OCEAN DRIVE AND THE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT. ALL THESE PROJECTS AND SO MANY MORE ON LINE ARE WHAT MAKES

MIAMI BEACH ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING AND PROGRESSIVE CITIES IN THE COUNTRY. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS NOT LACKING IN MIAMI BEACH

THE COMMISSION ALSO RECENTLY APPROVED THE 17TH STREET MASTER PLAN, THE CENTERPIECE OF WHICH IS THE NEW WORLD SYMPHONY'S "SOUNDSPEACE" WITH A POSSIBILITY OF A TOWN CENTER WITH ADDITIONAL GREENSPACE THAT WILL ONE DAY BE THE CATALYST TO BETTER CONNECT LINCOLN ROAD, OCEAN DRIVE, THE COLLINS AVENUE HOTEL DISTRICT AND THE CONVENTION CENTER. AND LET'S NOT FORGET ABOUT THE NEW AND EXCITING ESPANOLA WAY WITH ITS INFRASTRUCTURE AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS TO ADD ANOTHER EXCITING CORRIDOR FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO ENJOY AND TO FURTHER BOOST THE CITY'S SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY. . **LINDA POLANSKY AND SCOTT ROBBINS..** YOU DESERVE SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR YOUR VISION AND COMMITMENT TO THE REVITALIZATION OF ESPANOLA WAY.

PROTECTING, ASSISTING, STABILIZING AND GROWING OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS A TEAM EFFORT. LET'S RECOGNIZE THE TEAM

LEADERS. **ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER CHRISTINA CUERVO AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GURU KEVIN CROWDER**, STAND UP FOR A MINUTE CHRISTINA. I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY, AND I KNOW MY COLLEAGUES JOIN WITH ME, TO THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IN REFORMING THE RDA. YOU INHERITED NOTHING LESS THAN A MESS, AND IT'S ONLY BEEN SINCE YOU TOOK THE REIGNS CAN WE SAFELY SAY THAT PUBLIC DOLLARS GENERATED WITHIN THE RDA ZONES ARE NOW BEING STEERED TO FUND THE PROJECTS THOSE MONIES WERE MEANT TO FUND.

PERHAPS THERE'S NO BETTER EXAMPLE OF THE NEW RDA SPENDING THAN THE WASHINGTON AVENUE STREETSCAPE IN SOUTH PONTE, A PROJECT ALREADY COMPLETED THIS YEAR, WHICH BRINGS A WONDERFUL AMENITY TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND FOR ALL OF OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WHO ENJOY THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE. CHRISTINA, YOU DESERVE A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS.

THE CITY HAS MORE AND MORE TURNED ITS ATTENTION AND RESOURCES TOWARD THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH BEACH AREA. NEW ROADS, SIDEWALKS, SIGNAGE, SEWAGE LINES AND BEACH ACCESS RAMPS ARE BEING DESIGNED CONSTRUCTED AND COMPLETED.

NORTH BEACH RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS, SUCH AS UNIDAD, THE NORTH BEACH DEVELOPMENT

CORPORATION, AYUDA AND THE TEEN JOB CORPS –ARE ALL CONTRIBUTING AND WORKING TOGETHER ON A NUMBER OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE THE NORTH END OF THE CITY. ALONG WITH SOME INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE ART AND CULTURE IN NORTH BEACH, WE’LL SOON HAVE A NEW HOME FOR COMMUNITY –BASED GROUPS AND A YOUTH CENTER TO SERVICE THE GROWING NUMBER OF FAMILIES IN THE NORTH END OF THE CITY. **JOE FONTANA**, YOU DESERVE A HAND FOR YOUR PERSISTENCE TO KEEP THAT “YUTE” CENTER ROLLING ALONG. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, JOE.

IN THE SPIRIT OF PROTECTING AND BEAUTIFYING OUR PUBLIC BEACHES, WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC FACTOR IN OUR CITY’S FUTURE, EMERGES AN ISSUE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE: SIMPLY PUT: BEACH PRESERVATION.

I RECENTLY TRAVELED TO TALLAHASSEE AND TO WASHINGTON DC TO MEET WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW MAKERS, REQUESTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INCREASE BEACH MAINTENANCE LEVELS AND TO EXPAND AND DEVELOP BEACH EROSION PREVENTION PROJECTS. I AM COMMITTED TO PRESERVING OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE—OUR BEACHES.

A HEALTHY AND WELL-MAINTAINED BEACH IS MORE THAN JUST AN ISSUE OF BEAUTY AND PROVIDING RESIDENTS AND VISITORS A WONDERFUL AMENITY TO ENJOY. A HEALTHY BEACH AND DUNE

SYSTEM ALSO PROVIDES THE NECESSARY BUFFER TO PROTECT OUR VALUABLE WATERFRONT PROPERTIES IN THE EVENT OF A MAJOR STORM OR HURRICANE.

THE NEW TECHNOLOGY OF OUR BREAKWATER PROJECTS BETWEEN 33RD AND 35TH STREETS, HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL AS THE BEACH NATURALLY REPLENISHES ITSELF BY SHIFTING THE FLOW OF SAND.

WITH THAT NEW TECHNOLOGY MILLIONS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS ARE SAVED.

TODAY I AM ALSO PROUD TO ANNOUNCE, THAT ALONG WITH THE HELP OF **CONGRESSWOMAN ILEANA ROS- LENTIHAN** AND THE DADE DELEGATION WE HAVE SECURED A 2.3 MILLION DOLLAR FEDERAL GRANT TO HELP US WITH THESE PROJECTS.

THIS CITY WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS---IF NOT FOR OUR EMPLOYEES.... IT HAS LONG BEEN THE COMMISSIONS GOAL THAT MIAMI BEACH BE THE SAFEST AND CLEANEST RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY AND VISITOR DESTINATION POSSIBLE, AND TO BACK UP THAT COMMITMENT, WE HAVE INVESTED ENORMOUS RESOURCES INTO ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS. HAVE WE BEEN PERFECT? NO. DO WE HAVE MORE WORK TO DO? ABSOLUTELY. AND THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE A TOP PRIORITY

FOR THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND THIS ENTIRE GOVERNMENT. OVER THE PAST YEAR OUR MAYOR ON THE MOVE PROGRAM HAS VISITED

EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE CITY SO CITY HALL CAN COME TO YOU. I WISH TO THANK **MANAGER JORGE GONZALEZ** AND ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS INITIATIVE. THE INTERACTION BETWEEN CITY PERSONNEL AND RESIDENTS HAS BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY POSITIVE. I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING “MAYOR ON THE MOVE” THROUGHOUT THE COMING YEAR.

THERE IS A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE FACING THIS COMMUNITY CONCERNING THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF MANY RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS IN AND OUT OF OUR HISTORIC DISTRICTS. DURING THE PAST YEAR THERE HAS BEEN A DISCONCERTING NUMBER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS THAT HAVE BEEN DEMOLISHED BECAUSE OUR BUILDING DIRECTOR AND ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS HAVE FOUND THAT THESE STRUCTURES ARE UNSAFE AND THREATEN THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC. THE BUILDING AND ENGINEER EXPERTS HAVE FOUND THAT THE CONCRETE AND STEEL HOLDING UP MANY BUILDINGS IN MIAMI BEACH ARE DETERIORATING OVER TIME AND MANY ARE SOON REACHING THE LIMITS OF SAFETY. WE SEE EVIDENCE OF THESE PROBLEMS WHEN THE STEEL RUSTS AND THE CONCRETE SWELLS AROUND THE STEEL AND EVEN CRACKS. SOMETIMES THESE PROBLEMS ARE NOT VISIBLE BUT NEVERTHELESS THE BUILDINGS ARE BECOMING UNSAFE.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC, ABOUT THE LOSS OF VALUABLE HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND THE COSTS THAT PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS ARE INCURRING AS A RESULT OF A NATURAL AGING PROCESS IN THE SOUTH FLORIDA ENVIRONMENT, WHICH SOME EXPERTS BELIEVE IS CAUSED BY THE SALT WATER IN OUR AIR.

AS A RESULT I AM ANNOUNCING THE CREATION OF A MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO INVESTIGATE THIS PROBLEM AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HOW THIS CITY CAN RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

FIRST: WE NEED TO FIND A BETTER WAY TO MONITOR OUR BUILDINGS TO DETERMINE WHICH BUILDINGS ARE BECOMING STRUCTURALLY UNSAFE BEFORE THEY BECOME A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC SO THAT REPAIRS MAY BEGIN RATHER THAN FACING THE NEED TO DEMOLISH ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS.

SECOND: WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO PROTECT OUR HISTORIC STRUCTURES FROM DETERIORATION AND TO DETERMINE WHAT INCENTIVES MUST BE GIVEN TO PROPERTY OWNERS TO ASSURE THAT OUR HISTORIC HERITAGE IS PROTECTED.

THIRD: WE NEED TO ASSURE PROPERTY OWNERS THAT IF THEY TAKE RESPONSIBLE STEPS TO PRESERVE THEIR

PROPERTY, THAT THEY WILL NOT BE PENALIZED FOR THEIR GOOD FAITH EFFORTS TO REPLICATE AND RESTORE STRUCTURES.

I AM REQUESTING MEMBERS OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS, RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNERS, ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS AND REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS BLUE RIBBON PANEL, WHICH I WILL BE FORMING SHORTLY. THIS PANEL WILL SERVE TO ADVISE THIS CITY ON THESE TECHNICAL ISSUES AND TO GIVE US RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT LAWS AND REGULATIONS NEED TO BE APPROVED BY THIS CITY TO ADDRESS THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

THERE ARE OTHER ISSUES WE WILL BE FACING IN THE NEAR FUTURE. EXACTLY ONE YEAR AGO TODAY, AT MY FIRST STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, I RAISED SEVERAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE AUTOMATIC CONTRACT RENEWALS BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU. WELL, BACK THEN IT MAY HAVE STIRRED UP A LITTLE CONTROVERSY, IF YOU RECALL. OKAY, MAYBE A TAD MORE THAN JUST A LITTLE CONTROVERSY.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF MY COLLEAGUES, AND I DO WANT TO EXPRESS MY THANKS TO EACH OF THEM, WE PLACED SEVERAL

POINTS OF REFORM INTO THE CONTRACT RENEWAL, INCLUDING THE HIRING OF PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY TO ADVISE US IF THE BUREAU IS PERFORMING IN THE BEST INTEREST OF MIAMI BEACH. THE STUDY SHOULD BE COMPLETED IN TWO TO THREE MONTHS. FURTHER, I WISH TO THANK COMMISSIONER **LUIS GARCIA** FOR BEING THE LIASON ON THE BUREAU'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. I AM CONFIDENT THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE ENTIRE COMMISSION WILL REVIEW THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY WITH AN OPEN MIND, AND IF ANY CHANGE IS NEEDED, IT WILL BE HANDLED FAIRLY AND WITH THE BEST INTEREST OF THIS CITY BEING THE PRIMARY CONSIDERATION. AS MAYOR, I AM PLEASED THE PROCESS HAS BEEN OPENED.

LET ME TAKE THIS MOMENT TO INTRODUCE ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED PROFESSIONALS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY, **DONNA SHAW**, OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF TOURISM. WELCOME, DONNA. YOU HAVE A GREAT PRODUCT TO WORK WITH, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.

WE HAVE JUST CELEBRATED THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF MIAMI BEACH'S HUMAN RIGHTS ORDINANCE WHICH PROTECTS PEOPLE FROM BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST DUE TO RACE, RELIGION, ETHNICITY, OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION—OUR CITY IS PROUD OF NOT ONLY BEING THE FIRST MUNICIPALITY IN THE COUNTY TO ADOPT THIS ORDINANCE

BUT IN LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST THE REPEAL OF THE MIAMI DADE COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS ORDINANCE. MIAMI BEACH IS COMMITTED TO FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE GO BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, A COMMITTEE I'VE CHAIRED FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. I BELIEVE WE HAVE SOME COMMITTEE MEMBERS HERE WITH US TODAY. THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR TIME, AND IT IS QUITE A TIME CONSUMING COMMITTEE PROCESS.

THE VOTER-MANDATED \$92 MILLION DOLLAR G.O. BOND, ALONG WITH BOND REVENUES FROM WATER AND SEWER AND PARKS, HAVE COMPLETED A NUMBER OF PROJECTS.

OTHERS, PARTICULARLY THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOODS, ARE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF PLANNING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION. FROM NORTH SHORE OPEN SPACE PARK TO THE NEW POOL IN FLAMINGO PARK, THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR PUBLIC SPACES AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS HAS BEEN A CHALLENGING YET GRATIFYING EFFORT.

THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE; DIRECTOR TIM HEMSTREET, AND ALL THE PERSONNEL OF THE CAPITOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OFFICE; OUR PROGRAM MANAGERS HAZEN AND SAWYER; AND OF COURSE THE COMMUNITY'S INPUT AND PARTICIPATION HAVE BEEN KEY FACTORS IN THE SUCCESS OF THESE PROJECTS. THERE IS A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT WE ARE DEFINITELY ON THE WAY TO IMPROVING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND PARKS.

CITIZEN VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH HAS LONG BEEN A VITAL PART OF OUR FLOURISHING COMMUNITY. ON BEHALF OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND MY COLLEAGUES, I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO ALL OF THE RESIDENTS WHO SERVE ON OUR BOARDS AND COMMITTEES.

AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NEWLY FORMED CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE, A COMMITTEE MANDATED TO REVIEW OUR CHARTER EVERY TEN YEARS.

THANKS TO OUR LEGAL DEPARTMENT AND CLERK'S OFFICE.

MURRAY DUBBIN AND BOB PARCHER--

WE PUT A LOT ON YOUR PLATES AND, TO THE CREDIT OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL STAFFS, SOMEHOW IT ALL JUST SEEMS TO HAPPEN.

I WANT TO BRING UP ANOTHER PROJECT THAT DESERVES A SPECIAL MENTION. OUR BRAND NEW AND QUITE SPECTACULAR GOLF COURSE. I KNOW **COMMISSIONER SIMON CRUZ** HAS ALREADY PLAYED A FEW ROUNDS, AND FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, IT'S BEEN A MOST ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE. OUR DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION, **KEVIN SMITH**, AND HIS ENTIRE DEPARTMENT DESERVE A HAND, NOT ONLY FOR THE GOLF COURSE, BUT FOR SO MANY OTHER SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS. THANKS KEVIN.

AS KEVIN'S DEPARTMENT EXEMPLIFIES, THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH IS COMMITTED TO QUALITY WORK AND TO PROVIDING

EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE. IN OUR EFFORT TO ALWAYS BE BETTER, LATER TODAY WE WILL LAUNCH A NUMBER OF NEW RESIDENT SERVICES WITH STATE OF THE ART PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MAKE EACH RESIDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN CITY HALL A MORE PLEASANT AND CONVENIENT ONE.

BUT NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THAT CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE THAN TO BE TREATED WITH PROFESSIONAL COURTESY BY A CITY EMPLOYEE. THERE ARE SEVERAL EMPLOYEES I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE FOR DEMONSTRATING EXEMPLARY CUSTOMER SERVICE AND STELLAR OVERALL JOB PERFORMANCE:

IT TAKES TEAM WORK TO ACHIEVE ALL THAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS YEAR. IT WILL TAKE THAT SAME TEAM WORK TO GUIDE US INTO THE FUTURE. I AM TRULY EXCITED ABOUT WHAT IS TO COME.

ALEX DIAZ AND JUDY HOENSHOLT

ALEX AND JUDY ARE GRANT WRITERS FOR THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH. A JOB THAT CARRIES WITH IT A LOT OF PRESSURE, REQUIRES INTRICATE WRITING SKILLS, DEMANDS A GREAT AMOUNT OF RESEARCH AND TIGHT DEADLINES.

WE WILL HAVE TO RECOGNIZE ALEX IN ABSENTIA SINCE HE IS IN TALLAHASSEE CURRENTLY WORKING ON GRANTS. YOU CAN OFTEN FIND ALEX IN HIS OFFICE WORKING INTO THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING. BUT ALEX AND JUDY-- YOUR DEDICATION HAS

BROUGHT THIS CITY MUCH SUCCESS. IN FACT FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR, ALEX AND JUDY —OBTAINED SIX MILLION DOLLARS IN GRANTS FOR OUR CITY.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HARD WORK. I KNOW THAT ALEX ADDITIONALLY VOLUNTEERS HIS SERVICES TO MANY CHARITIES IN FINANCIAL DISTRESS. THANK YOU I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE DONE ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY.

ISABEL HYMAN. MRS. HYMAN JOINED THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH ON FEBRUARY 22 1982 AND HAS WORKED FOR THE CITY FOR OVER 21 YEARS. SHE HAS SERVED THE BUILDING AND CODE COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENTS IN THE CAPACITY OF CLERK TYPIST AND SECRETARY TO THE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR. OVER THE COURSE OF HER LONG CAREER WITH THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT, ISABEL HAS ALWAYS PERFORMED HER DUTIES WITH AN EYE TOWARDS SERVING CUSTOMERS FIRST BEFORE ATTENDING TO ANY OTHER MATTER. SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CUSTOMER SERVICE ADVOCATE AND A VOICE FOR THE PUBLIC WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.

FINALLY, A MAN WHO HAS A RATHER UNIQUE TALENT AND SKILL FOR MULTI TASKING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING, I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE MIAMI

BEACH POLICE CHIEF, **GEORGE NAVARRO**. GEORGE WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND. GEORGE HAS BEEN WITH THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR MORE THAN 15 YEARS.

GEORGE IS THE EYES AND EARS OF THIS CITY IN TOO MANY WAYS TO DESCRIBE. IN SOME WAYS THAT MAY EVEN GO BEYOND DESCRIPTION.

ALONG WITH **DETECTIVE BOBBY HERNANDEZ**, GEORGE HAS BECOME QUITE FAMILIAR TO VIEWERS AROUND THE WORLD AS THE FACE OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. ONE OF CHIEF DON DELUCCA'S SUCCESSES AS A POLICE EXECUTIVE IS RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR THE RIGHT JOB. THERE IS NO BETTER EXAMPLE THAN GEORGE.

BECAUSE OF GEORGE, MIAMI BEACH IS A BETTER AND SAFER CITY. HE IS SOMEONE EVERYBODY KNOWS IN EVERY DEPARTMENT. GEORGE IS ALWAYS THERE TO EXTEND HIMSELF. HE PUTS IN COUNTLESS HOURS AND IS ALWAYS DEPENDABLE AND HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL.

GEORGE OFTEN ASSISTS HIS COLLEAGUES IN COORDINATING AND DEVELOPING SECURITY FOR MAJOR EVENTS HERE IN THE CITY.... A SERIOUS AND DELICATE RESPONSIBILITY THAT OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED BECAUSE OF THE EVENT'S SUCCESS. MOST RECENTLY GEORGE WAS INVOLVED IN WITH A COMMITTEE THAT

IS CHARGED WITH HELPING TO DEVELOP A HOMELAND SECURITY PLAN FOR THE CITY.

GEORGE YOU HAVE TRULY MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THIS COMMUNITY AND YOUR SPECIAL RECOGNITION TODAY IS WELL DESERVED. ON BEHALF OF EVERYONE, I THANK YOU.

ANOTHER CRUCIAL ISSUE FACING OUR CITY IS REFERRED TO AS THE BURT J. HARRIS LEGISLATION.

SIMPLY PUT... OUR CITY ALONG WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING LOCAL CONTROL OF OUR ZONING POWERS DUE TO AN INSIDIOUS BILL TRAVELING THROUGH THE LEGISLATURE. THIS BILL WOULD EFFECTVIELY DO AWAY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO DOWN- ZONE ANY PRIVATE PROPERTY. IF THE BILL WERE TO BECOME LAW IT WOULD VACATE THE SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY PROTECTIONS GRANTED US AS A MUNICIPALITY. SUCH A LAW WOULD BE DEVASTATING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ABILITY TO CONTROL GROWTH AND PROPERLY PLAN.

AT THE LAST COMMISSION MEETING I PROPOSED A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THAT SENATE AND HOUSE BILL, AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY COLLEAGUES FOR THEIR UNANIMOUS VOTE IN SUPPORT OF THAT RESOLUTION. THAT RESOLUTION HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, SPEAKER OF THE

HOUSE AND GOVERNOR. BECAUSE OF THE DIRE CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE PASSAGE OF THIS LEGISLATION AS A CITY WE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO OPPOSE THIS BILL.

THE SECOND ISSUE THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED TODAY IS THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY REGARDING THE MOST APPROPRIATE METHOD TO IMPROVE TRANSIT WITHIN THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH. RIGHT NOW THE COMMISSION IS CONSIDERING SOME PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE OUR METHOD AND MODE OF TRANSIT.

ONE PROPOSAL INCLUDES A TWO TO FOUR YEAR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT THAT WILL TEAR UP APPROXIMATELY 50 CITY BLOCKS, MOSTLY WITHIN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT IN SOUTH BEACH. THIS PROPOSAL IS JUST ONE AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE TO IMPROVING A RAPID TRANSIT CONNECTION FROM MIAMI VIA THE MACARTHUR CAUSEWAY, USING ALTON ROAD, DADE BOULEVARD, WASHINGTON AVENUE AND THE CONVENTION CENTER.

THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT WILL CONSIST OF TEARING UP OUR STREETS TO LAY DOWN TRAIN TRACKS, TO PUT UP POLES TO RUN OVERHEAD ELECTRIC WIRING, AND ALSO THE BUILDING OF TRAIN STOP PLATFORMS THAT WILL REMOVE EXISTING PARKING SPACES. AS YOUR MAYOR, I OPPOSE THIS DISRUPTIVE AND COSTLY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT THAT WILL NOT ONLY TEAR UP OUR STREETS, BUT WILL ALSO DISRUPT AN ENTIRE CITY AND LIKELY

FORCE MANY OF OUR BUSINESSES INTO SOME TERRIBLE ECONOMIC PRESSURES.

THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO EVEN CONSIDER SUCH A DISRUPTION TO OUR CITY.

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT MIAMI BEACH NEEDS TO FIND A BETTER WAY TO IMPROVE ITS TRANSIT PLAN AND ITS ABILITY TO MOVE PEOPLE AROUND. THERE ARE OTHER AVAILABLE AND MORE APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVES THAN TEARING UP THE STREETS IN OUR HISTORIC DISTRICT.

I HAVE ASKED THE MANAGER, AND HE HAS ASSURED ME THAT HE WILL BRING TO THE COMMISSION A REPORT ON USING THE NEW TECHNOLOGY OF TRACKLESS TROLLEYS AND ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY BUSES AS AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO LAYING TRAIN TRACKS.

KEEP IN MIND, THE TECHNOLOGY OF TRACKLESS TROLLEYS AND BUSES, CAN FULFILL AND EVEN EXPAND ANY ROUTE OR LOOP TO CONNECT WITH DOWNTOWN MIAMI. IT'S FAR LESS COSTLY AND ALLOWS US MUCH GREATER FLEXIBILITY.

AT OUR LAST MEETING, THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO DIRECT THE MANAGER TO BRING ON BOARD A CONSULTANT TO ANALYZE TRACKLESS TROLLEYS AND BUSES AS AN ALTERNATIVE MODE TO LAYING TRACKS. IT WAS THE RIGHT DECISION BY THIS COMMISSION AND I COMMEND THEM

FOR THAT BETTER VISION FOR MIAMI BEACH.

LAST MONTH, AFTER MUCH STUDY AND THOUGHT, THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES, ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL AND HISTORIC CITY WITH MANY SIMILARITIES TO MIAMI BEACH, ALSO LOOKED AT WAYS TO IMPROVE ITS RAPID TRANSIT AND TO BETTER CONNECT TO THE REST OF THE COUNTY.

CORAL GABLES' ELECTED OFFICIALS, RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES CHOSE THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY OF TRACKLESS TROLLEYS RATHER THAN TEARING UP THEIR HISTORIC COMMUNITY WITH A TRACK LAYING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.

LIKE CORAL GABLES, MIAMI BEACH IS A BUILT-OUT HISTORIC COMMUNITY.

WHAT MAY BE A GOOD IDEA FOR A RAPID TRANSIT CONNECTOR IN OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTY, SUCH AS TRAIN TRACKS, IS NOT A GOOD IDEA FOR CORAL GABLES OR MIAMI BEACH. IN FACT, THERE IS NOTHING THAT I'VE SEEN DURING MY YEARS IN PUBLIC OFFICE THAT WOULD BE MORE DESTRUCTIVE TO THIS CITY THAN A SEVERAL YEAR PROJECT AND PROPOSAL TO TEAR UP ITS STREETS.

I WANT TO THANK MY FELLOW COLLEAGUES FOR THEIR UNANIMOUS VOTE NOT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE TRACK LAYING AND AGAIN WITH LAST WEEK'S DECISION TO TAKE A HARD

LOOK AT IMPROVING OUR TRANSIT WITH A MUCH MORE FLEXIBLE SYSTEM, WHERE TRACKLESS TROLLEYS AND BUSES COULD ACTUALLY RUN RIGHT UP TO NORTH BEACH.

AGAIN, IT WAS THE RIGHT DECISION.

BEFORE I CLOSE I WANT TO TALK BRIEFLY ABOUT THE FUTURE...

AND WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR MAYOR DURING THE NEXT YEAR. EXPECT A CONTINUING EFFORT, ALONG WITH MY COLLEAGUES, TO REFORM CAMPAIGN FINANCING, (THANKYOU **COMMISSIONER STEINBERG** FOR YOUR EFFORTS IN THIS AREA), TO CONTINUE THE SEARCH FOR A FAIR AND BALANCED APPROACH REGARDING THE NIGHTLIFE INDUSTRY AND RESIDENTS, THANK YOU **COMMISSIONER GROSS** FOR YOUR HELP IN THESE MATTERS, TO KEEP PUSHING THE LAWS TO THE LIMIT WITH COMPASSION AND UNDERSTANDING TO DEAL WITH THE NATIONWIDE ISSUES OF HOMELESSNESS.

AND YOU CAN DEPEND ON YOUR MAYOR TO SUPPORT OUR PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS AND IN ENFORCING MANY OF THOSE QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES THAT SO DETERMINE A CITY'S IMAGE AND ATTITUDE. EXPECT TO SEE YOUR MAYOR OUT IN THE COMMUNITY PROMOTING NEW BUSINESSES AND EVENTS THAT GENERATE NEW AVENUES OF REVENUE FOR THE CITY. YOU CAN EXPECT YOUR MAYOR TO ASK FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE MANY COMMUNITY AND PHILANTHROPIC EVENTS BEING PLANNED

BY MY OFFICE—AND YOU CAN DEPEND ON YOUR MAYOR TO
STAND UP AND FIGHT FOR WHAT IS BEST FOR THE RESIDENTS
AND BUSINESSES OF MIAMI BEACH. THAT, YOU CAN DEPEND ON.

GOD BLESS THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH. GOD BLESS AMERICA
AND ALL OF THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES
MILITARY. THANK YOU.

PLEASE, EVERYONE, JOIN US OUTSIDE AS WE UNVEIL A PLAQUE
AS A TRIBUTE TO THE REDEDICATION OF CITY HALL.

